

Glory and Gore (Go Hand in Hand) by OurLadyofPerpetualWallflowers

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: M/M

Language: English

Characters: Billy Hargrove, Steve Harrington

Relationships: Billy Hargrove/Steve Harrington

Status: Completed

Published: 2018-09-23

Updated: 2018-09-23

Packaged: 2022-04-23 02:41:33

Rating: Not Rated

Warnings: Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings

Chapters: 1

Words: 914

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

Hopper decides that the best offense is a good defense right around the time Billy decides that maybe he'd been a little out of line the night he nearly killed Harrington. Which is possibly how he gets roped into regular patrols of the woods, looking for signs of 'anything weird or out of the ordinary'. Billy wants to say everything about this town in weird but there's a darkness in Harrington's eyes when Hopper says it, a twitch in his hands as he studies the map between him and Billy.

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Author's Note:

I posted my Harringrove playlist on tumblr and invited prompts. This was requested by @pretendimstraight. Inspired by 'Glory and Gore' by Lorde. This song just always makes me think of the boys becoming a tight-knit team, so in tune that they are practically a unit. Like nobody even imagines one without the other anymore.

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They wind up assigned to Mirkwood, which makes Billy roll his eyes as much as it has him checking the shadows for giant spiders when they make their rounds. But overall...it's not terrible, walking through the woods with Steve Harrington by his side.

The first demodog they find is half-dead, and Steve lets Billy get a good look before he takes it out. He turns back to him panting, flecks of gore on his clothes, resignation on his face. He makes a little 'ta-da' gesture with his hands.

"That's a demodog. Kill on sight."

Billy gulps and maybe takes it a little more seriously after that.

They spend long nights walking the side of the road; Steve with his bat, Billy with a rifle that looks like military issue. They find more creatures, kill more creatures, they keep walking. All this translates its way into the waking world in little ways.

Billy and Steve become hyper aware of the other's presence. Basketball games are a joke now, with the two of them almost telepathically knowing when to pass, block, turn, shoot, score. They move like a team, like a boxer's fists, a one-two punch as easy as breathing. Harrington and Hargrove become the Starsky and Hutch of Hawkins, Indiana. It has strange side-effects, too.

Tommy takes the Keg King crown on the Fourth of July and Billy just lazily salutes him with his rum and coke, shoulder pressed against Steve's where they sit on a blanket from Joyce's car. Billy lets his popularity slip away. It all seems so petty after you've been chased by a venus flytrap from hell through the woods at midnight.

Neil comes after him only once after Billy finds out about the Upside Down. He throws him against the wall, gets in his face, and then stops. Billy's just standing there, calmly waiting for whatever's coming so he can get on with his evening. Harrington had nearly had his head bitten off last night, slipping on rain-slick leaves and landing on his back under a full grown Demogorgon, straining to stay alive until Billy had blown its head clean off. That moment is still fresh in Billy's mind, still shows on his face. His father doesn't scare him anymore. And Neil backs off.

Billy walks a little taller after that. Wonders if he has that same darkness in his eyes that he saw in Harrington's so many months ago.

He can't quite pinpoint when it changes. When walking on opposite sides of the road becomes brushing their fingers together as they match each other's steps. When they start lingering at their cars until the sun comes up. When he starts cataloging the way Steve runs his fingers through his hair when he's frustrated, or how he wraps his arms around himself when he's unsure. Billy just realizes he has all this knowledge one day and doesn't know what to do with it.

It doesn't boil over so much as bloom on a warm morning with the crickets in their ears and blood on their shoes. Billy's dropping him off at that big empty house when he suddenly pulls into the drive and kills the engine, gets out and walks him to the door like he's done it before. Steve fiddles with the lock, jiggles the handle to get it to open, lets it hang wide behind him as he kicks off his sneakers and yawns.

Billy follows behind, leaving his boots tangled up in Steve's Nikes, nudging the door closed and locking it without looking, shrugging out of his coat and placing it on a free hook.

They head upstairs silently, comfortably, and into Steve's massive bathroom. Billy chuckles at Steve's bleary-eyed look, the way he scratches absently at his belly as the water warms up.

They take turns in the shower but leave the door open, their clothes abandoned on the tile, and Billy snags the towel before Steve's done with it, gets a raspy grumble in reply.

They stumble into a bed not made for two nearly full grown men but just like always nowadays, they wordlessly adapt to the other's presence, curling and tucking into each other until they're comfortable. The day is barely breaking through the trees as Billy starts to drift off, Steve's warm breath against his neck, skin pale against his own tan.

It's never happened before but somehow, Billy knows that in a few hours, the daylight will wake them up, Steve moaning at the too-bright light until Billy drags himself downstairs to make coffee and lures him out. They'll raid the fridge for leftovers-pizza probably-and Billy will complain about the onions until Steve throws a half-eaten crust at him. The sun will stream in the windows and gild the scene in golden light setting off honey and copper in Steve's brown eyes across the table. Billy can see it in his mind as sleep overtakes him.

What a glorious sight.